

## U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

### News Release

#### *Eastern Massachusetts National Wildlife Refuge Complex*

Assabet River NWR · Great Meadows NWR · Mashpee NWR · Massasoit NWR · Monomoy NWR ·  
Nantucket NWR · Nomans Land Island NWR · Oxbow NWR

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**July 18, 2005**

**For Immediate Release**

### U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Announces Proposed New Hunting and Fishing Regulations

On July 12, 2005, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service published proposed hunting and fishing regulations in the Federal Register (70 FR 40108). The public is invited to comment on the proposed rule, which opens and expands hunting and fishing opportunities on 13 national wildlife refuges and 12 wetland management districts throughout the country. Hunting and fishing cannot occur on national wildlife refuges until Federal regulations are changed. Three local national wildlife refuges are included in the proposed rule.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service proposes to establish hunting and fishing programs at Assabet River NWR, Great Meadows NWR, and Oxbow NWR. Not all of the refuges are open for all hunt seasons, and there are portions of the refuges that will remain completely closed to hunting.

The intention to establish new and expanded hunting and fishing programs was included in the comprehensive conservation plans for these refuges, released in January 2005. Almost 2,000 comments were received in 2003 during the public review period for the draft plans. Adoption of the final rule is necessary before any hunting or fishing program can be implemented.

At Assabet River NWR, located in Sudbury, Hudson, Maynard and Stow, fishing would be allowed at Puffer Pond, and the refuge would be open to woodcock, ruffed grouse, cottontail rabbit, gray squirrel, white-tailed deer and turkey hunting.

At Great Meadows NWR, located in Sudbury, Wayland, Lincoln, Concord, Bedford, Carlisle, and Billerica, the refuge would be open to white-tailed deer and waterfowl hunting. Parts of this refuge will remain closed to hunting.

At Oxbow NWR, located in Harvard, Lancaster, Shirley, and Ayer, the refuge would be open to white-tailed deer and waterfowl hunting, and areas open to woodcock, ruffed grouse, cottontail rabbit, gray squirrel and turkey would be expanded. Parts of this refuge will remain closed to hunting.

The proposed rule also identifies refuge-specific hunting regulations. Permits will be required to hunt these refuges. For administrative reasons, permits will not be issued until the 2006 hunt season.

The deadline to comment on the proposed rule is August 5, 2005. Comments may be submitted by one of several methods:

- Federal eRulemaking Portal at <http://www.regulations.gov>
- Mail comments to: Chief, Division of Conservation Planning and Policy, National Wildlife Refuge System, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 4401 N. Fairfax Drive, Room 670, Arlington, VA 22203
- Email to: [refugesystempolicycomments@fws.gov](mailto:refugesystempolicycomments@fws.gov). If emailing comments, submit comments as an ASCII file, avoid the use of special characters and any form of encryption, and include "Attn: 1018-AU14", your full name and address in your message.

The draft rule and refuge maps can be found at <http://assabriver.fws.gov>; <http://greatmeadows.fws.gov>; and <http://oxbow.fws.gov>.

### **Assabet River National Wildlife Refuge**

- Woodcock may be hunted north of Hudson Road in the towns of Sudbury, Maynard and Stow. Some areas north of Hudson Road will be archery only.
- Ruffed grouse, cottontail rabbit, and gray squirrel may be hunted north of Hudson Road in the towns of Sudbury, Maynard and Stow. Some areas north of Hudson Road will be archery only.
- White-tailed deer may be hunted north of Hudson Road in the towns of Sudbury, Maynard and Stow. Some areas north of Hudson Road will be archery only.
- White-tailed deer may be hunted south of Hudson Road in the towns of Sudbury and Hudson. Archery only.
- Turkey may be hunted north of Hudson Road in the towns of Sudbury, Maynard and Stow. Some areas north of Hudson Road will be archery only.
- Turkey may be hunted south of Hudson Road in the towns of Sudbury and Hudson. Archery only.

### **Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge**

- White-tailed deer may be hunted north of Rt. 225 in Carlisle, Bedford and Billerica and in parts of Sudbury and Wayland. Archery only.
- Waterfowl may be hunted on or along the Concord River north of Rt. 225 in Bedford and Carlisle and on or along sections of the Sudbury River between Shermans Bridge Road in Wayland and Plymouth Road in Sudbury, between Routes 27 and 20 in Sudbury and Wayland, and along the southern portion of Heard Pond and the Sudbury River south of Heard Pond in Wayland.

### **Oxbow National Wildlife Refuge**

- Waterfowl may be hunted on or along the Nashua River south of Rt. 2 in Harvard.
- Common snipe may be hunted on or along the Nashua River south of Rt. 2 in Harvard.
- Woodcock may be hunted south of Rt. 2 in Harvard and in portions of the refuge north of Rt. 2 in Harvard and Shirley.
- Ruffed grouse, cottontail rabbit, and gray squirrels may be hunted south of Rt. 2 in Harvard and in portions of the refuge north of Rt. 2 in Harvard and Shirley.
- White-tailed deer may be hunted south of Rt. 2 in Harvard and in portions of the refuge north of Rt. 2 in Harvard, Shirley and Ayer. Some areas in Harvard and all of the hunting in Ayer is archery only.
- Turkey may be hunted south of Rt. 2 in Harvard and in portions of the refuge north of Rt. 2 in Harvard, Shirley and Ayer. Only archery hunting is allowed in Ayer.